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Dispatches from The Fringe - Fit/Misfit misses and hits

September 14, 2013

10:29 AM MST



Fit/Misfit

Iseli- Chiodi Dance Company and Lux Boreal Dance Company

Fit/Misfit by Iseli- Chiodi Dance Company and Lux Boreal

Rating: ★★★★★

The showdown begins. Four dancers take to the stage, all deep stares and menace. In silence they square up, walk away, move around the space trying to catch up with, yet remain distant from one another other. The silence continues, interrupted by a bell chiming. Meet Jazmin, Chino, Raul and Angel. Four Desperadoes who fit but don't fit, belong yet don't belong, are fluid yet strangely rigid in a performance that aspires to be both [dance](#) and theatrical, full of gracious movement and prolonged motionlessness. Opposites come into play in *Fit/Misfit*. But if opposites attract, not all opposites play as well together.

A solo guitarist arrives and begins referencing the style of Morricone's classic Spaghetti Westerns. As all four dancers, arms held rigidly to the front, come together in a sort of impossible group hug,

the theme of fitting but not fitting is made evident. Gradually we are introduced to each character and various relationships come to the fore in a controlled explosion of energy and movement. So too does the discomfort, confines and restrictions relationships impose, along with the need to modify the body and the self to accommodate them. Pairs form only to separate, groupings of three coalesce with the fourth left in solitary isolation as the distance, dominance and cost of belonging are superbly rendered. Choreography is tight throughout, with rapid shifts as powerful tableaux are created. Costume changes are perfectly handled and the whole flows seamlessly until all four collapse onto the floor. The music softens and a little comic relief is offered as we are introduced to Andrew, the guitarist. But from this point on *Fit/Misfit* never really gets back on its feet.

During a solo by Jazmin, a jittery, robot like routine, the remainder of the dancers sat around. This was indicative of much of what was to follow. There was a moment of promise when all four gathered tightly around Raul as he swung his jacket in the air. But the remainder of *Fit/Misfit* was dominated by protracted spells of little or no activity. At times it felt like the dance equivalent of John Cages', 4'33" with prolonged posing and little or no movement while eyes stared off broodily into space. The inaction sapped much of the energy and when the end arrived, with bodies colliding in wild, operatic frenzy, it came a little too late, went on a little too long and lost much of its potentially thrilling impact.

An international collaboration between Irish based, Iseli- Chiodi Dance Company, Mexican dance company Lux Boreal and Cork based musicians, Horsemen Pass By, *Fit/Misfit* attempts to bring together several ingredients in its thoughtful explorations of the need and difficulties of belonging. But not all its ingredients blended or contrasted well. Its sluggishness of pace at times, periods of inaction and tenuous sense of theatricality often undermined the dynamism of the dance. And these gifted dancers were at their exquisite best when they danced.

Fit/Misfit runs at The Smock Alley Theatre until September. Doors open 4.00 p.m. Tickets are €12.00



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